

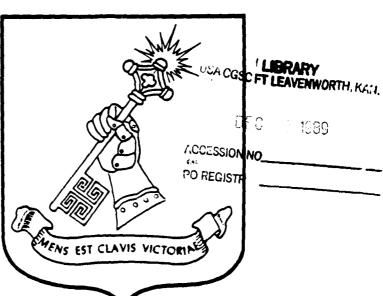
OPERATIONAL DECEPTION DOCTRINE MELDING THE AIR, GROUND, AND NAVAL EFFORT

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A Monograph by

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OPERATIONAL DECEPTION DOCTRINE MELDING THE AIR, GROUND, AND NAVAL EFFORT

by

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15 May 1989

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ABSTRACT

OPERATIONAL DECEPTION DOCTRINE—MELDING THE AIR, GROUND, AND NAVAL EFFORT.

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This paper examines the relationship between the theory and practice of operational deception, and our new Battlefield Deception dectrine. The paper begins with an examination of the art of war focusing on what both ancient and modern theorists reveal about deception and its relationship to surprise. It continues with the historical review and analysis of several successful deception operations beginning with those conducted during the Second World War. Following this campaign analysis the paper examines our new doctrine on battlefield deception to determine the maxims of deception. These deception maxims are then compared with the theory and practice of deception to determine if our new doctrine is flawed.

The study concludes that while adequate for tactical operations the doctrine is flawed at the operational level. The authors have written the manual purely from a land component perspective, ignoring the fact that it is at the operational level of war that the effects of air, ground, and naval components are joined. It also is inconsistent with the historical cases reviewed. Historically it is proven that the Army and Army Group commanders integrated air and naval operations into their operational deception plans. Modern EAC level commanders must conduct both battle and deception using more than their own service components. Operational deception is Joint deception.

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Deception ⇒ Surprise ⇒ Initiative

"Airland Battle doctrine describes the Army's approach to generating and applying combat power at the operational and tactical levels. It is based on securing or retaining the initiative and exercising it aggressively to accomplish the mission." To secure the initiative we must strike our opponent in such a manner as to surprise him, throw him off balance, and prevent him from recovering. One method of achieving surprise is through the use of deception.

The relationship between deception, surprise, and initiative can be described as cause and effect. In essence, deception yields surprise, and surprise yields initiative. In this regard, all three factors, deception, surprise, and initiative, are inextricably linked. To gain and retain the initiative we must continuously surprise our enemy. To obtain surprise, we must first learn the art of deception.

Our keystone warfighting manual, FM 100-5, Operations, discusses the operational level of war in great detail, and most officers understand the operational aspects of maneuver, firepower, protection, and leadership. However, while FM 100-5 emphasizes deception at the operational level, few officers seem to grasp the concepts of deception at this level of war.

There are several reasons for this failure. First, it is difficult to train deception at the operational level. The cost of force on force operational maneuver in terms of maneuver space, fuel, ammo, and expendable supplies is astronomical. The only training available to the operational commander and his staff is through Command Post Exercises

(CPXs). Modern automated battle simulations, such as those used by the Warrior Preparation Center (WPC) and the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), fall short in the area of deception. Simulations are programmed to track the activities of both opponents. They reveal the opposition's activities only if intelligence assets are available to detect and acquire them. The goal of deception is to hide the real and show the false and there is no guarantee that the deception will succeed in either endeavor. Simulations are unable to compute these factors and it usually is left up to a human interactor to make an unscientific judgement regarding the effectiveness of the deception effort. Second, many officers are convinced that modern technological advances rule out both operational and strategic deception. Technology has produced a wealth of highly sophisticated sensor systems. These systems are capable of detecting signatures caused by heat, light, electronic radiation, odor, sound, and movement, to name just a few. Many believe that if the enemy is out there a sensor can find him. All of these systems can be fooled, and will be, by a good deception plan. Finally, the concept of operational deception is still relatively new. Until recently the Army's manual for deception, FM 90-2, was titled Tactical Deception. It was only in October 1988 that a new edition of this manual was published titled Battlefield Deception. The new manual, for the first time, addresses the concept of operational deception.

Deception is the deliberate attempt to manipulate the perceptions of the enemy commander in order to gain a competitive advantage.² At the operational level, deception seeks to influence the decisions of the enemy commander before the battle occurs. In this manner the operational commander sets the stage in such a way that he ensures the favorable outcome of tactical battles and subsequent operational exploitation of those results.

Deceptive measures can be either active or passive in their execution. Both measures are important to the success of the deception effort. Passive measures are those used to hide the real situation from enemy sensors. The most commonly used techniques include camouflage, cover, concealment, and signal security. Active deception measures are those used to portray a false situation to enemy sensors. Four types of active measures are used to present the deception story: feints, demonstrations, ruses, and displays.

The purpose of this monograph is to determine the precepts of operational deception through the examination of several campaigns and major operations. This examination will reveal those consistencies and commonalties in operational deception planning and execution that should be included in our deception doctrine. These precepts will then be compared to those derived from our new battlefield deception doctrine to determine if the doctrine is complete or flawed. Graphically, it looks like this:

THEORY + PRACTICE = X
DOCTRINE = Y
DOES X = Y?
IF NOT, WHAT IS THE SHORTFALL?

Figure 1. Monograph Logic Flow

The paper begins with an examination of the art of war focusing on what ancient and modern theorists reveal about deception and its relationship to the principle of surprise. It then continues with the

historical review and analysis of successful deception operations.

Following the campaign analysis the paper examines our new doctrine on battlement deception and presents several maxims of deception. The study concludes by comparing these precepts with what we learned from the theory and practice of deception and makes several recommendations regarding our deception doctrine as it applies to the operational level of war.

SECTION II

DECEPTION: THE THEORY

All warfare is based on deception. Therefore, when capable, feign incapacity; when active, inactivity. When near, make it appear that you are far away; when far away, that you are near. Offer the enemy bait to lure him; feign disorder and strike him.³ SUNTZU

"Deception has long been recognized as one of the most important elements inherent in warfare." Since you cannot be strong at all points, using deception can disguise your actual dispositions on the battlefield. More than that, it can cause your opponent to make decisions that will place him in a disadvantageous position. Five hundred years before Christ, Sun Tzu noted in his essays on the art of war that "All warfare is based on deception." He recognized that it was possible to gain advantages against his enemies by surprising them through guile and cunning actions. His thought at the top of this page, captures all of the essential components of deception today. His guidance demands that the commander use all the tools at his disposal to confuse his opponent as to his actual capabilities and intent. He suggests that once an enemy has been inaccurately convinced you are weak at a specific location and time, you can lure that enemy into action on terms unfavorable to him and destroy him.

Clausewitz suggests that surprise, without exception, lies at the root of all operations. He points out that it is easier to achieve surprise at the tactical level of war than at the strategic. His rationale for this statement is based on the longer time needed for a state to secretly prepare for war or to surprise another with a strategic attack.⁶

While fully supporting surprise in battle, Clausewitz does not see the utility of deception. His experiences in Napoleonic warfare led him to seek the enemy's center of gravity and to concentrate his forces at that decisive point. In his mind, diversionary attacks and other *ruse de guerre* resulted in less troops available to the commander at the decisive point and were, therefore, wasted effort.⁷

Jomini believed in the use of deception and recognized the importance of keeping the enemy off balance through deceptive means. His thoughts regarding detachment operations are remarkably similar to our definition of demonstrations. He describes one purpose for the use of detachments as: "To operate a deception with a view to drawing the enemy in a direction where you desire him to march in order to facilitate an operation undertaken on another side." He does caution however that the detachment conducting the dramonstration should not become decisively engaged because it might need to promptly rejoin the main body. Jomini shows us the value of deception activities; they convince the enemy to do something that puts him at a disadvantage. Such actions can tie up enemy combat power at other points of the battlefield permitting us to conduct operations with superior correlation of forces at the decisive point.

While recognizing the value of deception Jomini agrees with Clausewitz that the most important element is concentration and triumph at the decisive point. Jomini warns that we must "...guard against yielding to the attractions of multiplied detachments, for many armies have been seen to succumb for not having known how to remain concentrated." 10

A more modern military theorist, General Waldemar Erfurth in his book *Surprise*, provides several thoughts regarding the uses of

deception to gain surprise. "On principle, it can be said that surprises are only accomplished if and when by some kind of a ruse the enemy has been deceived, or confused." He also states that total surprise is not necessary, that "The enemy may well know many important details about the attack in preparation and still be surprised by its location and timing." These points are valuable to our current doctrine today.

Mao Tse-tung discusses the value of deception in revolutionary warfare in *On Protracted War.* He believed that "In order to achieve victory we must as far as possible make the enemy blind and deaf by sealing his eyes and ears and drive his commanders to distraction by creating confusion in their minds." His primary method for creating confusion is deception and trickery. Mao writes: "... it is often possible by various ruses to succeed in leading the enemy into a morass of wrong judgements and actions so that he loses his superiority and the initiative... There can never be too much deception in war..."

As I have illustrated in this section, the theorists recognized the importance of achieving surprise on the battlefield. Moreover, several of them specifically indicated how the use of deception created the means for securing the initiative needed for victory. Having established the theoretical foundation of deception, I will now examine the battlefield to see how deception paves the way to victory.

SECTION III

DECEPTION: THE PRACTICE

In war-time, truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies. 15 SIR WINSTON CHURCHIL

History provides us with several excellent examples of both successful and unsuccessful attempts at operational deception. This study looks at five of those attempts to derive common factors or maxims for use in the analysis of our deception doctrine. Specifically, the five case studies examined are Operation Fortitude (Allied invasion of Normandy 1944), Operation Wacht am Rhein (German Ardennes Counteroffensive 1944), Operation Bagration (Soviet Belorussian Offensive, 1944) and Operation Badr (Egyptian Sinai invasion 1973).

FORTITUDE - NORMANDY 1944

By November 1943, the planning for the Allied cross channel invasion of France had been on going for almost three years. Now, as the plans took form, the risk of failure became evident. The American and British planners knew that something had to be done to improve the chance of success. If Hitler committed his armored reserves against the Normandy beaches, he could crush the invasion. This would have started a series of political events that would leave the Alliance crippled for years. Somehow the Allies had to catch the defenders off balance. This task became the responsibility of the London Controlling Section (LCS), Britain's covert agency for the coordination of all deception operations. Shortly thereafter, Operation Bodyguard came to life.

Operation Bodyguard was not a deception operation in itself. Rather, it was the overall strategy for a number of cover and deception operations to confuse Hitler as to the Allies true intentions in Western Europe in 1944. Its objectives were twofold. First, compel Hitler to spread his combat power throughout Europe so that he would not have sufficient strength concentrated to defeat the inevitable Allied invasion; and second, delay his reaction to the invasion by disrupting his entire signal, intelligence, supply, and administrative systems. To accomplish these tasks, Bodyguard incorporated at least thirty-six subordinate operational and tactical deception plans. The subordinate plans designated to directly cover the Normandy invasion were code named 'Fortitude'. 17

The responsibility for planning and executing Fortitude fell on SHAEF's Special Means (Ops "B") committee. Their plan had three goals:18

- 1) Cause the Wehrmacht to make faulty troop dispositions by portraying a military threat against Norway.
- 2) Deceive the enemy as to the correct target date and target area of Operation Neptune (Normandy Landings).
- 3) Induce the enemy to make faulty tactical dispositions during and after Neptune by threats against Pas de Calais.

Hitler believed Norway was of strategic importance to the Third Reich. Operation Fortitude North was designed to reinforce Hitler's belief. Hitler had massed 400,000 men and large amounts of equipment in Norway and Fortitude North was to keep them there. Ops "B" created the fictitious British 4th Army and stationed it in Scotland with the headquarters in Edinburgh castle. The mission of 4th Army was to invade Norway at Stavanger, then push on towards Oslo.¹⁹

The operation made excellent use of a variety of deceptive ploys. It created several bogus divisions all with simulated assembly areas, headquarters, and logistics bases. Inflatable Sherman tanks were carelessly camouflaged in assembly areas, and plywood gliders were assembled at dummy airfields. Periodically these dummies would be moved at night to replicate new armor and airborne battalions arriving in the area. In the Firth of Forth, an invasion fleet of landing craft and barges was created out of chicken wire and canvas. A number of real tugs and smaller vessels were always moving about the moorings adding motion and credence to this fleet.

Dummy wooden twin-engined bombers appeared on airfields near Edinburgh and Glasgow, simulating 4th Army's supporting air power. Logistic bases consisting of empty crates and drums grew larger in preparation for the invasion. Bogus and real antiaircraft artillery units were scattered throughout the area. The real AAA Battalions were instructed to keep the Luftwaffe reconnaissance aircraft at high altitude but not to shoot them down. The aerial photographs must not be crystal clear but they must make it back to the German intelligence staff. The visual masquerade was in place.²⁰

Large armies depend on a vast communications system to command and control subordinate units. As additional dummy units joined the 4th Army, new radio nets were activated. Fourth Army's radio net hummed with increased report flow. Examples of these reports included: daily unit reports, requests for ski equipment and training, requests for advice on handling snow equipment, to name a few. These reports were designed and transmitted specifically to be intercepted by the German signals intercept units. Ops "B" made good use of the media as well in its

deception efforts. Scotland's local newspapers were always well informed on 4th Army dances, bagpipe concerts, and regimental soccer games. Information of all types was used to portray the buildup of this bogus army and its subordinate units. Ops "B" made an effort to feed the deception story to as many intelligence sources as possible.

To maintain the credibility of the northern invasion, USAAF and RAF reconnaissance flights periodically examined the likely landing sites in Norway. Additionally, naval reconnaissance boats entered Skagerrak from the west and Russian submarines probed from the east. The structure grew larger every day while elements confirmed and reinforced each other.

While Fortitude North created the image of the secondary invasion of Norway, Fortitude South was portraying the ongoing efforts of the main invasion force. Fortitude South specifically was to accomplish three missions:

- 1) Conceal the real date of the invasion.
- 2) Indicate a false invasion area.
- 3) Convince the enemy, post facto, that the Normandy invasion was just a diversion and that another, greater invasion would come elsewhere.

Fortitude South reinforced the German General Staff's conviction that the Allies would invade at Pas de Calais. The General Staff had studied the coastline and decided that the best place to invade Europe was at Pas de Calais. Hitler built his strongest fortifications, and positioned his armored reserve at Calais in order to stop the invasion on the beach.

To accomplish Fortitude South's mission, General Patton was transferred out of the Mediterranean to command the fictitious First US

Army Group (FUSAG). Patton's reputation as a bold, offensively minded commander was well known to the German High Command. They had surmised that Patton would command the main effort.

With the same skills demonstrated in Scotland, Ops "B" established the necessary displays to convince German intelligence that FUSAG was preparing for the assault at Pas de Calais. Dummy tanks, trucks, and other equipment were positioned in assembly areas throughout Eastern and Southeastern England. Real units scheduled for the actual invasion at Normandy were interspersed throughout the area to add credibility to the deception effort. As in Scotland, logistic sites were established to support the bogus combat units. Particularly noteworthy was an oil storage, docking, and pumping facility constructed on the channel coast near Dover. Its appearance was so realistic that German long-range artillery routinely fired upon it.

As with Fortitude North, air and naval support was essential to complete the deception. "For every bombing mission sent out over Normandy, two equivalent missions were scheduled for the Pas de Calais." These missions served the dual purpose of interdicting supply and transportation lines and covering up the location of the real invasion location. Naval reconnaissance was increased in the Pas de Calais area as well, simulating Allied intelligence collection prior to the invasion.

Once again bogus radio nets provided information to German intelligence in routine messages sent between FUSAG units in both clear and coded texts. Double agents under the control of the Double-Cross committee provided the FUSAG order of battle to German intelligence and confirmed that FUSAG would invade France near Pas de Calais in late June or early July 1944.

Extremely important to all Fortitude deception plans success was the flow of intelligence reports from German agents in the United Kingdom. It was through the efforts of the XX (Double-Cross) Committee of MI-5 (British Counterespionage and Security Service) that this was possible. While most Double-Cross activities are still classified, it is known that the committee was responsible for imprisoning or converting every German agent sent to the British Isles. It was through "trusted" German agents that Germany received confirmation of the invasion preparation and specifically the late July landing date.

When the Allies finally did land at Normandy German intelligence discovered that Patton was not the Allied commander in France. This strengthened their belief that Normandy was only a diversion and that Patton's Army Group was to conduct the main invasion elsewhere, most likely Pas de Calais.²² "For seven weeks, the German 15th Army waited for an invasion that never came, convinced beyond all reasonable doubt that Patton would lead the main Allied assault..." Fortitude was a complete success.

WACHT AM RHEIN- ARDENNES 1944

"I have just made a momentous decision. I shall go over to the counter-attack, that is to say—here, out of the Ardennes, with the objective—Antwerp." It was these words, spoken on 16 September 1944 by Adolf Hitler that started the planning for the German Ardennes Counter-offensive.

Hitler believed that the Americans and British lines of support were stretched to the limit and that the alliance might be split apart if one side was hit hard enough. He planned a surprise counter offensive to seize bridgeheads over the Meuse River and to capture Antwerp. If successful, this maneuver would isolate the British/Canadian and American forces north of the line Bastogne-Brussels-Antwerp setting the stage for their piecemeal destruction. To gain the surprise necessary for the success of this operation, Hitler cloaked his plan in surprise and deception. Even the name 'Watch on the Rhine' had a distinctly defensive sound to it.

To conceal the personality of the actual commander of this operation, Hitler recalled Field Marshal von Rundstedt from retirement to assume command of OB WEST. The Allies had great respect for Rundstedt's reputation as a master of defensive operations. They expected him to command his forces in a rational defensive manner. From their previous experience with Rundstedt, the Allies expected him to conduct a stalwart forward defense followed by a counterattack at the appropriate opportunity. Ultimately, however, they believed he would fall back to the Rhine River for the major defensive operation. The Allies wanted to believe that Germany was incapable of mounting an offensive. With Von Rundstedt as commander OB WEST they were convinced that the Germans would continue to fight a defensive war. Von Rundstedt, however, was merely a decoy, Hitler was personally commanding this offensive.

The deception plan played to the Allies preconception that the Germans were unable to mass sufficient combat power to conduct major offensive operations. The plan drew attention to German forces concentrating in a sector northwest of Cologne and diverted attention from the Ardennes. Recent Allied offensive gains in the north had secured the city of Aachen, and reports of German forces moving to that sector seemed both plausible and consistent with previous German actions.

To add credibility to the story, the Sixth Panzer Army was ostensibly headquartered northwest of Cologne to command a counterattack force of several Panzer divisions. South of the Sixth Panzer, a fictitious 25th Army was created and given an order of battle of ten divisions, including Panzer divisions actually assigned to Sixth Panzer Army. Further to the south, the battle weary Seventh Army consisting of several burned out Volksgrenadier divisions was positioned opposite the VIII US Corps in a quiet sector of the Schnee Eifel. It was in the Schnee Eifel where the actual concentration of forces would occur.

Rail and road traffic throughout Sixth Panzer's area intensified. Several troop movements were conducted in daylight and were only partially concealed to ensure the Allies noticed the build up of forces in this area. Radio traffic commensurate with troop concentration increased and provided another indicator that German forces were massing in this sector. To protect this fictitious concentration, additional antiaircraft artillery battalions were positioned in the sector. Ammunition basic loads for these units were augmented to increase the intensity of fire power in this area so Allied air forces would be convinced that forces were concentrated there. The intensity of fire would force reconnaissance flights to higher altitudes where they could not get a close look or photograph too accurately.

In contrast to Sixth Panzer Army's bogus concentration, the real concentrations in the Schnee Eifel were products of great secrecy. All rail and road movements into the Ardennes were conducted during the hours of darkness and strictly controlled. Special security detachments patrolled the area to ensure proper noise and light discipline was maintained. A complete radio blackout was in effect for all units in the concentration

areas with the exception of those units actually facing enemy positions along the front.27

To ensure absolute secrecy about both the counter offensive and the supporting deception plan. Hitler forbid the Armed Forces Operations Staff from discussing the plan with Commander in Chief West or his staff until the last possible moment. Officers with knowledge of the plan were sworn to secrecy and administered an oath acknowledging the death penalty for violations of security. To prevent accidental disclosure to the Allies all instructions were hand delivered by special couriers using only ground transportation. Liaison officers were expressly forbidden to travel by plane in order to prevent accidental compromise as occurred prior to the invasion of France in 1940. Lastly, no discussion of the plan was permitted over radios or telephones.

The Volksgrenadier Divisions in the Schnee Eifel were rotated frequently to accustom the green troops of VIII US Corps to troop movements in the planned areas of attack. In the final days of preparation, the sounds of low flying aircraft were used to cover the noise of armor and artillery forces moving to forward assembly areas. By the date of the actual attack, the muffled sounds of armor vehicles moving behind German lines was regarded as just another rotation.²⁸

Although the counter offensive lacked the combat power to accomplish its objective, operational deception was achieved. The master deceivers of the Normandy Invasion had themselves been deceived.

BACRATION - BELORUSSIA 1944

It is important that this study briefly review Soviet use of Maskirovka (deception) during the Second World War. As our most likely antagonist in any future conflict, we must understand how the Soviets will conduct deception operations. The Soviets attempted Maskirovka operations as early as 1941, just days following the German invasion of their country. By the time of Operation Bagration, in 1944, they had become masters of deception. Their experiences from this war formed the basis for their deception doctrine today.

During the spring of 1944, the Soviets conducted a series of simultaneous and successive front operations that drove the German Army from the Ukraine to the Polish and Rumanian borders. By June, the Soviet's planned an offensive to destroy the German Army Group Center in Belorussia, penetrate into Poland, reach the Baltic Sea and cut off Army Group North. These operations would create the conditions conducive to future operations in Poland and into Germany.³⁰

To establish the combat ratios required for success, the Soviet High Command (STAVKA), had to conduct a massive redeployment so the four Soviet fronts opposing Army Group Center could be reinforced.

Specifically, it would be necessary to move over 400,000 men, 3,000 tanks.

10,000 guns and mortars, 300,000 tons of fuel, and 500,000 cans of rations.

Hiding such a massive redeployment demanded extensive Maskirovka at strategic, operational, and tactical levels.³¹

To ensure secrecy, the Soviets limited the number of persons involved with the planning. "The immediate planning circle included only the Deputy of High Command and the Chief of the General Staff and his

deputy. The number of planners at each front headquarters was equally restricted. Written documents were stringently controlled and in many instances, orders were verbally issued to subordinate leaders rather than in writing.

The Maskirovka was designed to reinforce existing German beliefs. The Balkans were of vital importance to Hitler so it seemed only natural to the German High Command that the Soviets would continue their main effort in the south. STAVKA issued orders on 3 May to the 3d Ukrainian Front commander to "show a concentration of eight-nine rifle divisions, reinforced with tanks and artillery...." This bogus concentration would be kept active by shifting dummy units equipped with tank, gun, and vehicle mock-ups frequently within the region. Real anti-aircraft artillery units were positioned with these bogus units to prevent German air reconnaissance from getting too good a look. Additionally, STAVKA ordered all fronts in the south to remain as active as possible in an attempt to fix German attention at the exact point they expected the Soviet's attack. 4

Road movement was kept to a minimum. If road movement was required it was conducted at night under strict light and march discipline. During rest halts, forces were dispersed, camouflaged, and kept isolated from the local civilian population. Maximum effort was made to conduct all movements by rail because of the greater operations security it afforded. 55

Throughout the planning phase of the operation, defensive actions were conducted in the main attack sectors. Soviet troops constructed dummy minefields, and improved their defensive positions. Concurrent with these preparations, unit newspapers expounded on the requirement to

protect every inch of Russian soil, and warned of impending German attacks.

Special engineer units were assigned to assist in physical deception preparations, special deception staffs augmented other headquarters to portray fictitious units, and traffic control units assisted in the efficient movement of real troop formations.

Throughout May, German intelligence remained convinced that the Soviet main effort would be in the south. The Soviet build-up opposite Army Group Center was detected in June but German Intelligence dismissed it as a deception. The German Army Command clung to its preconceived notion that the main attack would be in the south and discarded any information that suggested otherwise.

Soviet use of operational deception in this campaign was successful in covering the major shift of forces. German High Command and Army Group Center intelligence staffs were unable to detect the major redeployments of armies from other fronts. Both headquarters noted several tactical regrouping of forces within the fronts opposite Army Group Center and surmised the Soviet intention to attack. Ultimately they even learned the general timing of the attack. But at no time prior to the assault did they deduce the scope nor scale of the attack. This gave the Soviets a marked advantage resulting in the destruction of three German Armies (28 divisions) and at least 350,000 men.³⁶

BADR - SINAI 1973

To complete the historical review, a look at a more recent operation will demonstrate how deception evolved in thirty years. I selected the 1973

Arab-Israeli War over other examples (Czechoslovakia 1968, Afghanistan 1979) because of the east-west military-political alinement of the adversaries. The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) made heavy use of U.S. intelligence reports throughout the war, while the Egyptians relied on the USSR for their training in deception. Because of these alignments lessons learned in this conflict may be of a higher value than other modern deception operations.

Immediately following their defeat in the 1967 war, the Egyptian high command began the planning for what ultimately became Operation Badr. The objective of the plan was to retake those areas lost to the Israelis as a result of the 1967 war. The aim was to capture these areas by military action and negotiate a political settlement before the IDF could mobilize and counterattack. The key to the success of this plan was deception. The Egyptians needed to surprise the Israeli government through the execution of detailed deception plans at the political, strategic, and operational levels. A special deception staff was formed in 1968 to plan and execute this highly faceted deception operation.

The objective of these plans was twofold:

- 1) Cover the mobilization and concentration of forces under the guise of routine exercise activity.
- 2) Play to the Israeli preconception that the Egyptian armed forces were ill prepared and incapable of conducting offensive action.

Several methods were used to cover the mobilization of the armed forces. The attack was to occur during the Moslem religious month of Ramadan and on the Jewish high holy day of Yom Kipper. The Egyptian planners anticipated that Israel would not expect an offensive to begin

during this holiday period and that the IDF would be in a reduced state of readiness.

Every year since the 1967 defeat the Egyptian armed forces mobilized their reserves and General Headquarters and conducted an annual military exercise focusing on crossing the Suez canal. During 1973, the Egyptians conducted 22 mobilization drills, each time summoning, training, and releasing all of their reserve forces. This served two purposes: first, it perfected the reserve mobilization system, and second, it lulled the Israelis to sleep. At first, the Israelis would mobilize their forces as well, then because of repetitive nature of the exercises and the expense of mobilizing, they began to discount the mobilizations as harassment.³⁷

Along with the mobilization exercises, a well thought out campaign of misinformation was conducted. On 27 September 1973, the Egyptians mobilized some of their reservists, telling them that they would be released on 7 October. On 30 September 1973, yet another reserve call-up was conducted and this group told that they would be released on 10 October. On 4 October 1973, the high command demobilized 20,000 reservists (including some that were part of the 27 September call-up). All of the mobilizations were part of announced exercises reported to the press. As normal by this time, there was no reaction from the Israelis.³⁸

On 29 September 1973, an event took place that may, or may not, have been part of the Egyptian deception plan but distracted the Israeli government away from the Suez Canal. A group of Palestinian terrorists attacked a train carrying Russian Jews from Moscow to Vienna at the Czech-Austrian border, taking five Jews and an Austrian customs official hostage. In the course of events, the Austrian Chancellor initiated a proposal to close the transit center for Jewish immigrants near Vienna.

The Israeli government became completely involved with this problem and paid little attention to what was happening along the Suez Canal.³⁹

The deception plan played on Israeli preconceptions regarding the state of readiness of the Egyptian forces as well. The intelligence community reviewed the state of readiness from a total war perspective. The Israeli intelligence community concluded that Egypt did not have sufficient air power to strike deep into Israel. Additionally, they did not have sufficient long range ground-to-ground missiles to deter (by retaliation) deep Israeli air strikes. Until they acquired this deep strike capability, war was not expected. They had not considered that the Egyptians might pursue a limited objective.

Additionally, the IDF suffered from overconfidence. They believed they could defeat any type of Egyptian attack. They had fought the Egyptians several times before and won, and they did not see any significant improvements in the quality of the current Egyptian soldier. The Egyptian deception plan played on this perception and leaked announcements to the international press regarding the poor quality of Egyptian training and equipment. This management of misinformation produced the desired effect of building Israeli overconfidence.

The high degree of security placed on both the operation and the deception plan is also noteworthy. In order to maintain maximum secrecy, only a small group of staff members were involved in the planning process. Five days prior to D-day the two field army commanders were briefed on the operation and told to plan to execute Operation Eadr. They were instructed not to tell their division commanders until D-3, the brigade commanders until D-2, the battalion and company commanders until D-1, and the platoon leaders and men until H-6 on D-Day itself. When senior

officers were questioned by their subordinates regarding the intensity of the on-going activities, they were told that all training exercises should be as realistic as possible.

Unlike the one-time, short duration use of deception prior to World War II we now see the emergence of long term, multispectral deception plans. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 was conducted after the crisis had peaked and during a time when political settlement seemed to be proceeding well. Similarly the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 occurred following political actions in the Afghan government. The Soviet use of "ill-prepared" category II and III military units in a short notice operation to achieve operational surprise is also noteworthy. Modern deception plans require actions in political, social, and economic arenas as well as military actions in order to succeed. The next section will review US deception doctrine to see if it is consistent with both theory and practice.

SECTION IV

DECEPTION: THE DOCTRINE

Stratagem is a skill transmitted by conscious instruction from master to student. BARTON WHALEY

The U.S. Army has never fully integrated deception into it's Operations doctrine. From 1967 to 1978 Army deception doctrine was in a classified manual, FM 31-40, *Tactical Cover and Deception*, Several facts regarding this manual are worth noting. First, that it was classified at the confidential level. This indicated that if the deception guidance was leaked to the enemy that it would result in a loss of some importance to the United States. Second, it addressed cover and deception at the tactical (as opposed to strategic) level. No attempt was made to separate the passive measures of cover, concealment, and camouflage from the active measures of feints, demonstrations, ruses, and displays. Third, the document was part of the 31-series manuals. This series included the doctrine for use of Special Forces and Psychological warfare units. In 1978, new doctrine was published.

FM 90-2, Tactical Deception, focused purely on deception at the tactical level. Particularly noteworthy was the fact that this manual was not classified. For some reason our deception techniques were no longer critical to national defense. The new doctrine was formatted as a "How To Fight" manual and as a 90-series document. The 90-series manuals contain Army doctrine on special purpose warfare. Examples include: River Crossing Operations, Desert Operations, Military Operations in Urbanized Terrain (MOUT), and Rear Battle. Putting it in the special purpose warfare

category raises an interesting question. If deception operations are supposed to be part of every plan, why isn't the doctrine in the 100-series?

The next step in the evolution of deception doctrine was, at least on the surface, the expansion of Army doctrine to include operational as well as tactic considerations. The 1980s brought a resurgence of interest in the operational level of war. FM 100-5, *Operations*, has undergone significant changes twice during this decade as we continue to study how to conduct large-scale military operations. In keeping pace with these changes, in 1988 the Army published a new edition of FM 90-2; this one titled *Battlefield Deception*.

The new battlefield deception doctrine begins by stating that deception is a "lost art." The authors explain that today's commanders make little use of deception in conducting combat operations. As a result, many of the deception skills that served our Army in World War II and Korea have been forgotten. This new manual seeks to revitalize that lost art.

The manual explains the importance of deception to AirLand Battle operations. It defines battlefield deception as those operations conducted at theater level and below to purposely mislead enemy forces by distorting, concealing, or falsifying indicators of friendly intent, capability, or disposition.⁴³ For the first time since 1967, deception doctrine examines the operational, and to a lesser extent, strategic level of war.

Operational deception seeks to influence the decisions of enemy commanders before battle occurs. This is done to ensure the success of tactical actions which can subsequently be operationally exploitable. At the tactical level, deception focuses on protection by masking the tactical disposition and intent of the force. Major differences in scale and payoff

exist between the two levels. Common to both levels, however, are several maxims. They are listed below:46

Magruder's Principles—The Exploitation of Perceptions.

Limitations to Human Information Processing.

Cry-Wolf.

Jones' Dilemma.

A Choice Among Types of Deception.

Axelrod's Contribution: The Husbanding of Assets.

A Sequencing Rule.

The Importance of Feedback.

The Monkey's Paw.

Care in the Design of Planned Placement of Deceptive Material.

Since the authors have chosen to conceal the principles behind quip titles, I will summarize the key points of each. First, it is generally easier to convince your enemy to follow his own preconceptions than it is to convince him otherwise. Fecond, the human mind is susceptible to conditioning. Frequently, opponents will fail to notice small changes in indicators even if the cumulative change over time is large. Third, the enemy can be conditioned or de-sensitized to an event through the use of repeated false alarms. Fourth, deception becomes more difficult as the number of different sensors increases. However, the greater the number of controlled sensors the greater the likelihood the deception will be believed. Fifth, the objective of the deception efforts is to reduce the uncertainty in the mind of the target forcing him to seize upon the notional view as being correct. Increasing the number of seemingly false

alternatives will make the target more certain of the "correct" notional view. 51 Sixth, there are circumstances where deception assets should be held in reserve despite the costs of maintenance and risk, for a time of greater benefit. 52 Seventh, deception activities should be sequenced so as to maximize the credible portrayal of the deception story for as long as possible. 53 Eighth, knowing that the enemy is paying attention to your deception effort increases your chance of success. 54 Ninth, there are times when the deception effort will produce subtle and unwanted reactions by both enemy and friendly forces. Deception planners must be aware that fog and friction is unavoidable in their area as well. 55 Finally, information that enemy intelligence collectors acquire too easily is often dismissed as false. 56

The authors claim that the above maxims form the foundation from which our new doctrine is constructed. They reinforce these maxims with a discussion of several factors of deception derived from the historical study of previous operations. These factors include:⁵⁷

Policy	Intelligence
Objective	Enemy Capabilities
Planning	Friendly Force Capabilities
Coordination	Forces and Personnel
Timing	Means
Security	Supervision
Realism	Liaison
Flexibility	Feedback

Figure 2. Factors of deception listed in new doctrine

These factors are similar to those derived by the author from his study of deception theory and practice. Both sets of factors will be discussed in greater detail in the analysis section of this document.

SECTION V ANALYSIS

The essence of deception is that it lets the enemy convince himself that the misleading picture is valid. HANDEL

Multiple campaigns, numerous major operations, and the writings of respected military theorists emphasize the importance of deception.

Each of the case studies examined highlight the importance deception plays in modern warfare. Each of the theorists reinforce the criticality of surprise achieved through cunning.

Sun Tzu's maxim that all warfare is based on deception demonstrates the historical significance of the function. Clausewitz and Jomini both mention the use of cunning and stratagem as ways of gaining advantages over an enemy. Two modern theorists, Erfurth and Mao, discussed how deception and ruses were the basis for surprise. Although they did not provide us with precepts of deception, each theorist impressed upon us the requirement for surprise and ergo for deception.

The examination of campaigns and major operations highlight the complexity of modern deception operations. The study of these campaigns yield nine factors (see Figure 3) common to all modern deception plans. These nine factors form the basis for our analysis. Each will be discussed in relation to the deception maxims and factors contained in our doctrine. The result of this comparison will show those areas that our doctrine is consistent with the theory and practice of deception, and in which areas a clear disconnect exists.

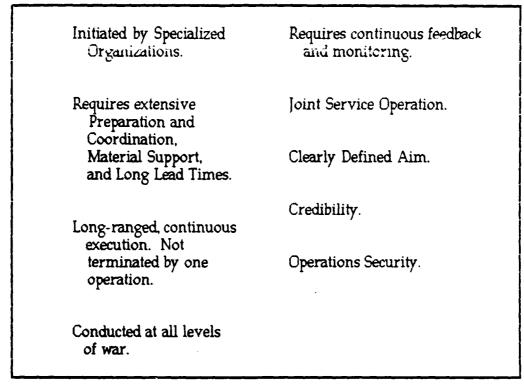


Figure 3. Factors of Modern Deception

INITIATED BY SPECIALIZED ORGANIZATIONS

During World War II we witnessed the creation of specialized staffs and organizations to plan, coordinate, and execute deception operations. Organizations such as the London Controlling Section were required to manage deception efforts of an unprecedented scale. Deception became so complex that a single leader could no longer coordinate all of the different intelligence, military, and political aspects of the operation. Additionally, control of lower-level deception efforts was required to prevent compromises between each other that might threaten the main effort. 59

It seems successful deception requires a special staft organized and trained to conduct those activities. It is simply too complex at operational and strategic levels to be done part time by the operations staff. The

intricate weaving of security, secrecy, operational deception, strategic deception, and political deception to achieve the desired level of surprise must be done by specially trained soldiers, with unique specialized, technical deception equipment.⁶⁰

Special staffs such as Wavell's Middle East Commands "A" Force, and SHAEF's Ops "B" were created to coordinate deception operations on a regional level as well. Real troop movements had to be carefully orchestrated and camouflaged while dummy forces were being positioned. Coordination of deception measures at the operational level had become a full time job.61

Our own Army created and employed a combat deception unit during World War II designated as the 23d Special Troops. This was a composite unit, consisting of the following units:

Headquarters and Headquarters Company 603 Engineer Camouflage Battalion 406 Engineer Combat Company 3132 Signal Service Company, Special Signal Company, Special Medical Detachment

The unit had the specialized training and equipment needed to employ a variety of visual, sonic, and electronic deception means.

Operations of the 23rd Special Troops were the responsibility of the Special Plans Branch, G-3 Section, European Theater of Operations, with authority delegated to Bradley's 12th Army Group.⁶²

Our battlefield deception doctrine discusses the requirement for coordination and supervision of the deception effort. It warns us of the effect fog and friction will have on our deception plan and advises us to be prepared for it. One method discussed in FM 90-2 is the use of a specialized deception staff to conduct centralized coordination of the deception effort.

EXTENSIVE PREPARATION AND COORDINATION

In order to portray the appearance of an Army in Scotland and an Army Group in Southern England, the LCS had to ensure that all of the intelligence indicators were present. Hundreds of dummy tanks, trucks, naval vessels, aircraft and logistical facilities had to be created, positioned and moved in order to present the proper picture. Dummy equipment took time to manufacture and realistic deployment schedules had to be planned and executed. The same is true today. The scale of modern deception measures require longer lead times and greater preparation.

Battlefield Deception supports this as well. The manual discusses the planning, coordination, means, and time required to realistically portray the deception story. In order to deceive the enemy's multiple intelligence sensors more time is required to prepare and execute the deception plan. The appropriate means of deception must be realistic and in sufficient number to convince the target of the size and intent of the dummy force.

LONG-RANCE, CONTINUOUS EXECUTION

Modern deception plans often seek long ranged results and are conducted over longer periods of time. The Egyptian plan for retaking the Sinai in 1973 is a case in point. The deception staff planned and executed a massive five year deception effort. Also recall that the Allies perpetuated the myth that Patton's Army Group was the main effort for close to two months after the Normandy landings.

FM 90-2 agrees. It also states that successful modern deception will be long ranged and continuous. One of its maxims is that information gained too quick was is discounted as false. Information must be realistically fed to the enemy's intelligence system piece by piece in order to convince him of our story.

CONDUCTED AT ALL LEVELS OF WAR

Prior to World War II, deception plans were primarily tactical in nature. Modern plans can cover all three levels of war. Plans like Churchill's "Bodyguard" and the Soviets plan for their 1944 offensive in Belorussia are a tangled web of political, strategic, operational, and tactical deception. Consider the misinformation plan used by the Egyptians from 1968 to October 1973 and how they manipulated the foreign press to paint a picture of Egyptian military ineptness. Its clear modern deception plans span all levels of war.

In the definition of battlefield deception our doctrine discusses the use of deception in the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. It states that strategic deception plans are designed to facilitate war fighting at the theater level and higher.⁶³

CONTINUOUS FEEDBACK

Successful deception depends on continuous feedback and intelligence monitoring of the enemy. Allied planners used ULTRA to let them know how well their deception efforts worked. Present day deception planners must understand both how and what their enemy targets are thinking. This will continue to place a premium on intelligence collection assets

across all spectrums. Both the maxims and factors contained in our new doctrine stress the importance of feedback.

JOINT SERVICE OPERATION

History has shown that operational deception is no longer a single service effort. To be successful at deception you must integrate air, ground, and naval effects. Consider Operation Fortitude's heavy bomber attacks on Pas de Calais and the naval demonstration in Skagerrak. If we want to attack the enemy throughout the depth of the battlefield, than our deception planners must learn to "think joint" in their planning. This idea is only partially consistent with our new deception doctrine.

In its discussion of strategic deception, the manual says strategic deception plans should contain event taskings for one or more service components operating in the same theater. While in agreement that deception spans all levels of war, the doctrine implies that EAC organizations are only interested in the development of land component slices of the strategic plan. This is not correct! Our operational level commanders must integrate the efforts of air, ground, and naval forces in their deception plans.

CLEARLY DEFINED AIM

Modern deception plans must have a clearly defined aim. The deception staff must ask the commander, "What do you want the enemy to do?" never "What do you want the enemy to think?" In other words, the deception plan must support the actual operational scheme. Many deception operations failed because the deception story did not support

reality. Deception is a means to an end, it is never an end by itself. Our new doctrine concurs. It discusses the requirement of a clearly defined objective in planning deception effort.

CREDIBILITY

The deception story must have credibility. The story must unfold in a logical manner, playing to the enemy's preconceptions. When Patton was appointed as the commander of the fictitious FUSAG it played to the enemy's preconception that we would use our boldest commander to lead the main invasion. When Patton was not listed as the commander ashore at Normandy it reinforced German preconceptions that the main attack was yet to come. Doctrine agrees that the deception must be realistic, credible, and where possible based on the preconceived notions of the enemy commander.

OPERATIONS SECURITY

Another important precept is the criticality of the security and secrecy of both the real and the dummy plan. Consider Hitler's secrecy concerning the Ardennes counteroffensive. It was because of his fanaticism over security and secrecy and our over-dependence and trust in ULTRA that we were caught unaware in December 1944. OPSEC remains a vital ingredient to any deception plan. Our doctrine stresses the requirement for stringent security both for the true situation and the deception plan. Forces and staff not directly involved with the deception have not requirement to know specifics about the deception plan.

Too much secrecy can have adverse effects on the real plan. During World War I the British deception staff planned a fictitious invasion behind German lines. The objective was to force the Germans to commit their operational and strategic reserves to guard the coastline behind their right flank. The deception plan was a complete success, but could not be exploited by the ground commander because neither he nor is intelligence staff were aware of the deception plan. The Germans shifted their forces to protect their right flank. The British intelligence staff detected the movement of the German reserves to the right flank and reported it to the ground commander. Since he was unaware of the deception, he shifted his forces to block an anticipated German offensive. If the deception and operations staffs had coordinated their activities more closely the British could have exploited the success of the deception plan.

As a result of the analysis of theory, practice, and doctrine, several consistencies and inconsistencies are now apparent. The importance of specialized staffs, time, continuous feedback, joint operations, clearly defined aim, credibility, and operations security are continuously stressed. In spite of the consistencies between theory, practice, and doctrine our new doctrine is still flawed. One factor of modern deception, that of multiservice operation at the operational level of war, is lacking from our doctrine.

SECTION V! CONCLUSIONS

In war it is all-important to gain and retain the initiative, to make the enemy conform to your action, to dance to your tune. SIR WILLIAM SLIM

The precepts of deception developed in the previous sections of this study were compared to the factors of battlefield deception contained in the new deception doctrine and one area was found to be deficient. While the tactical deception doctrine remained valid, operational deception doctrine made no attempt to integrate air, ground, and naval deception efforts.

The discussion of deception at the operational level of war focused on what Echelons Above Corps (EAC) commanders could do with ground forces only. Operational deception is by nature a joint operation and must integrate the efforts of air, ground, and naval forces within the theater of operations. In describing the relationship between strategic and operational deception plans, FM 90-2 states:

Although EAC organizations are not precluded from developing operational-level deceptions independent of the strategic context, they usually will be *land component-specific*, derivative slices of strategic deception plans.⁶⁶ (Emphasis mine.)

This is not how our operational level commanders need to plan, and from recent exercise experience during WINTEX 89, not the way they conduct deception today. Planners in NORTHAG and 2ATAF worked together in close coordination to develop a joint air-ground deception plan to support NORTHAG's campaign plan. This is true historically as well.

This paper's review of deception practice proved that our operational level commanders focused on more than just the land component battle.

To become proficient at operational deception our senior level commanders must coordinate the air, ground, and naval deception efforts. This task is made difficult by the absence of a capstone joint deception doctrine. As we continue to develop and refine our joint operations doctrine we must not forget our deception experience from the Second World War. Deception is a part of all campaign planning and the joint doctrine must reflect this.

Since deception is common to all operations it is not simply another military intelligence function. Deception doctrine, training, and force development should be an integrating center responsibility. The Combined Arms Center is responsible for those functions where combined arms operations are concerned, and the responsibility should rest there as opposed to the Military Intelligence Center and School. Deception is the responsibility of the G3 not the G2.

In the development of deception doctrine, the Army must not forget to develop the training and force requirements to support it. There exists a historically supported requirement for the creation of specialized deception staffs at all levels above division. Current actions have fielded deception cells at the tactical level (division/corps), future actions must ensure development of specialized staffs and equipment for our EAC level units as well as our unified and specified commands.

Our most likely adversaries will be either the Soviet Union or her surrogates. To the Soviets "... deception is not a forgotten art as it tends to be in the West. Rather it is stressed as a mandatory component of all strategic, operational, and tactical plans." Recent experiences in

Czechoslovakia, the Sinai Peninsula, and Afghanistan demonstrate that we can expect our opponent to make masterful use of deception throughout any conflict.

We must capture the lessons learned on deception from our past and be prepared to exploit deception efforts in the future. Operational deception is clearly an operational necessity to victory.

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- ⁵ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*: 53.
- ⁶ Carl von Clausewitz, On War, ed. and trans. Peter Paret and Michael Howard (1988): 198-99.
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- ⁹ Henri de Jomini, Summary of the Art of War, trans. Major Winship, USA (1854): 179.
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